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SUBJECT SED Relations with Other Political Groups

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1. Elements of the population of the DDR not affiliated with the SED but sympathizing with its objectives, specifically, members of the CDU and the LDP, are unofficially rated by members of the SED's inner circle according to the value of their collaboration with the SED. It is the pronounced policy of the SED to intensify its collaboration with these elements, although this policy is but little understood within the Party even among leading and well informed functionaries.
2. A comparatively small group of non-SED collaborators is granted the unofficial honor of treatment equal to that accorded to SED members, symbolized occasionally by prefixing the title "Genosse" (comrade) to their names. One man so honored is Deputy Minister President Otto Muechke to whom both Politburo member Fred Celsner and Kurt Hager, head of the Propaganda Section of the SED Central Committee, referred as "Genosse". The latter, in a lecture given at the Karl Marx Academy, mentioned that Muechke had exhorted the graduating class of the CDU Central School to make a thorough study of scientific socialism, because it is really the only science deserving of the name. When Hager's audience burst into loud laughter, he added that bourgeois professors and students, of course, could acquaint themselves only with certain parts of Marxism-Leninism, but could never grasp the doctrine as a whole.
3. A second category of collaborators, not rated as "Genossen", is composed of those whom the SED considers to be stupid but worth exploiting. The ministers of the church attending the peace conference in Essen may be taken as an example. They were termed by Walter Schellenberg, instructor at the Karl Marx Academy, "idiots whom we can turn to good account". Pastor Mientzler, former chancellor Wirth and ex-naval captain von Mücke, are of great importance to the SED, which assiduously courts their favor. No derogatory remarks regarding Mientzler will ever be made by SED functionaries; he belongs to neither the category of honorary "Genossen" nor the category of useful idiots.
4. The unceasing endeavors of the SED Central Committee to induce Party functionaries to exercise greater flexibility in their judgments regarding the value of collaborationist groups have met with little success among even such trustworthy elements as the teachers at the Karl Marx Academy. The prevailing opinion among the instructors, albeit not always expressed so bluntly, is that there is little aid to be gained from elements outside the Party and that it can accomplish more through its own efforts than through dependence upon

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such groups. This view reflects what is termed "distrust in the strength of the masses", a heresy condemned as an expression of "Sozialdemokratismus" and opportunism.

5. West German students attending the Karl Marx Academy and believed to reflect the prevailing sentiment within the KPD maintain that discussions and attempts at collaboration with the majority of the members of the SPD serve no useful purpose whatsoever. To date little success has attended efforts by the SED members to convince their KPD colleagues that this view constitutes a deviation from the Party line.
6. The SED and KPD, in their attempts to obtain influence among the rank and file of the West German SPD, have frequently made use of August Bebel, founder of the SPD and contemporary of Bismarck. Until very recently, the Karl Marx Academy, basing its teachings on an article by Stalin written in 1910 in praise of Bebel, advocated the following line: "We've got to make August Bebel our man, lest the SPD leadership usurp him", and the Party constantly described him as one of the greatest leaders of the German labor movement. This line is about to be abandoned. Fred Oelsner is preparing for publication an article in which Bebel is condemned as a "centrist", a term borrowed from the Short History of the KPD (b) and used by Lenin to castigate Bernstein and Kautsky. Oelsner will state that the Social Democrats may consider themselves fortunate that Bebel was not alive at the outbreak of World War I, since he no doubt would have voted in favor of war credits. This publication is bound to create considerable discussion among those SED functionaries who are former members of the SPD.

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